

Statement of Governor Haley Barbour
On Joint Legislative Budget Committee Recommendation
Tuesday, December 15, 2009

The Joint Legislative Budget Committee recommendation regarding the Fiscal Year 2011 budget contains significant cuts throughout state government, indicating legislative recognition that these dire fiscal times mean the budgeting process can't be business as usual. While the general theme of the JLBC recommendation shows the committee members are endorsing major savings, it does not contain any specific information on how agencies would accomplish these cost savings, which is consistent with the JLBC process. Those will be the toughest decisions, however, and I look forward to hearing ideas from the Legislature on how we can make the structural changes necessary to accomplish these cuts.

I am concerned the JLBC recommendation adds more than \$145 million to the budget revenue above the Executive Budget Recommendation I announced on November 16. About half of this new money is one-time money the JLBC recommends be spent for recurring expenses. I have consistently opposed spending one-time money for recurring expenses and will do so again in the 2010 Session.

It is vital that the FY 2011 budget reflect the reality of a continuing shortfall in revenue collections and disappearing federal stimulus money. I look forward to working with the Legislature to protect the state's funding priorities and meet the constitutional mandate of a genuinely balanced budget.

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